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Public Health Reports

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UNITED STATES.

YELLOW FEVER IN THE SOLDIERS' HOME AT HAMPTON, VA.

[Continued from last PUBLIC HEALTH REPORTS.]

August 4: Surgeon Wasdin reports 2 deaths at the Home to day, no new cases, no new cases in Phoebus, house inspection not finished.

August 5: Surgeon Wasdin reports, after conference with General McMahon and Colonel Smith, the situation reassuring, and that inmates from all infected dormitories can be tented by the 7th. No new cases to-day; 1 death. Total to date, 42 cases and 11 deaths. Disinfection begins to-night.

Surgeon Pettus reports the departure of the troops from Fortress Monroe on the steamship *McClellan* for Plum Island at 3.50 p. m.

Attendant Lindgren, who has practical knowledge of disinfection, is ordered from the hygienic laboratory to report to Surgeon White for duty as disinfecter at the Home. Two immunes from New Orleans are also ordered to the Home for the same purpose.

Surgeon White, in command of the campaign at Hampton, reports on the situation as follows:

MARINE-HOSPITAL SERVICE,
OFFICE OF MEDICAL OFFICER IN COMMAND,
Hampton, Va., August 5, 1899.

SIR: I have the honor to report that the situation here to-day is, to the best of my knowledge and belief, as follows:

The guard around the Soldiers' Home and the outer line surrounding the community known as Phoebus is effective, and the only coming and going through this line is that involved in the transportation of supplies to the people of the inside community by means of wagons,

whose crews are relayed at Hampton Bridge. The normal school, which is within the Phoebus district, though not a part of the town of Phoebus, being distant a mile therefrom, has liberally cordoned its own grounds, and in so doing has strengthened the Service cordon to that extent, the school lying partly between Soldiers' Home and Hampton, and partly between Phoebus and Hampton.

Passed Assistant Surgeon Wertenbaker is preparing a chart showing the relative position of the points involved in this quarantine and location of the cordon. The expense of maintenance of these cordons is large, but I believe, justified. Surgeon Wasdin, Acting Assistant Surgeon Vanderslice, and Acting Assistant Surgeon Reed are engaged in a house-to-house inspection in Phoebus, and arrangements have so far progressed on this side that I expect to begin a similar process in Hampton to-morrow morning.

I am informed by Assistant Surgeon Von Ezdorf that the outlook for a proper segregation of the old soldiers is improving.

So far as the control of transportation is in my power this portion of the necessary arrangements has been satisfactorily arranged. But so timid is the outside population that they refuse to admit empty flat cars in the outside communities for the purpose of bringing in freight. I hope, however, to soon be able to adjust this difficulty.

It is my opinion that after the completion of the present assignment to make arrangements for the inspection of outside territory as to drift, the service of Passed Assistant Surgeon Magruder will be extremely valuable at this point, and I trust that he may be ordered here. There is an infinity of small details to be attended to which are absolutely beyond the capacity of one or even two men, even if both are possessed of inexhaustible patience and ingenuity. Dr. Wertenbaker's time is entirely employed and entirely needed in seeing that the guard lines are what they should be, and consequently everything else falls upon me, and it is for this reason that I ask for Dr. Magruder, in whose judgment and discretion I have entire confidence, and with whom, therefore, I would be willing to share the responsibility of the discretionary work.

Respectfully, yours,

J. H. WHITE,
Surgeon.

The SUPERVISING SURGEON-GENERAL,
U. S. Marine-Hospital Service.

August 5: On request of the Secretary of the Treasury, the Secretary of the Navy directed the commandant of the Norfolk Navy-Yard to send a steam launch with 10 men to Surgeon Pettus to assist in patrol duty. This was done.

August 6: Surgeon White reports that the United Charities are feeding the people of Phoebus, but their funds are nearly exhausted. House-to-house inspection of Hampton to begin to-day.

August 7: Surgeon Vickey telegraphs: "One new case admitted to hospital to-day, was sick six days, no deaths."

Surgeon White reports the satisfactory progress of the house-to-house inspection of Hampton.

Acting Assistant Surgeon Donaldson reports, after investigation, Yorktown, Grafton, and surrounding country between Grove Station and Newport News entirely clean.

Surgeon Pettus reports the continuation of Norfolk's quarantine against Hampton and Old Point, and that it will probably continue four days longer. Arrangements were made looking to the establishment of a detention camp on Fishermans Island. Hospital Steward Richardson was ordered to report to Passed Assistant Surgeon Smith, at Norfolk, preparatory to going to Fishermans Island, should the camp be established.

Passed Assistant Surgeon Magruder reports no new developments at Newport News. Inspection began on the 6th, under Dr. Hobson.

August 8: Passed Assistant Surgeon Magruder reports inspection at Newport News progressing well; will be completed by the 9th; then a second inspection will be begun, and this plan will be continued till the epidemic ends.

Acting Assistant Surgeon Farquhar reports no yellow fever or suspects in Berkeley, no yellow fever in Portsmouth, but 1 refugee found there yesterday (7th) was sent to Craney Island.

Acting Assistant Surgeon Donaldson reports that a house-to-house inspection of Riverview and the district between Hampton and Newport News shows the district entirely clean.

Surgeon Wasdin reports that Von Ezdorf and Tuten are on duty in the Home, that 2 hospital tents are now erected for use as an intermediate hospital should it be necessary on account of spread of the disease. Three dormitories are now empty and being fumigated, the infected mattresses burned, and 1,300 inmates have been placed in tents.

August 9: Surgeon Vickery reports: "No change; everything favorable; nearly all in tents that can be moved. Disinfection of buildings pushed along by Von Ezdorf."

Report of the detention camp at Craney Island is as follows:

August 4: Six suspects found in Berkeley sent to Craney Island. Four refugees found in Portsmouth. Received, 13; on hand, 13. All well.

August 5: Received, 5; discharged, none; on hand, 18; all well.

August 6: Received, 2; discharged, none; on hand, 20; all well.

August 7: Received, 1; discharged, none; on hand, 20; all well.

August 8: Received, 2; discharged, none; on hand, 23; all well.

August 9: Acting Assistant Surgeon Archinard, having been ordered to Petersburg, Va., to look out for suspects, reports as follows:

I have the honor to report that I am still at Petersburg, overlooking the sanitary condition. From information gathered from the health officer and others, I do not believe that there exists any chance of yellow fever making an appearance in this locality. I will continue my inquiries relative to the conditions here until I hear from you.

August 9: Surgeon White reports that the last case in Phoebus has been furnished new clothing and discharged. No remaining foci and disease confined to Soldiers' Home. House-to-house inspection at Hampton completed shows nothing suspicious.

August 10: Act. Asst. Surg. John Archinard is ordered to proceed immediately to West Point on York River and work backward from that point to Richmond, stopping off at principal towns or hamlets to ascertain if there are refugees from Phoebus or Soldiers' Home, and if any suspicious cases are among them to wire his arrival at West Point and departure therefrom, and also to wire daily his whereabouts, and on return to Richmond to report for orders.

Acting Assistant Surgeon Farquhar is ordered to Suffolk, Va., with a view to locating any refugees from Phoebus or Soldiers' Home, and to make sure that Suffolk is clean. Thence he is to go to Bellefield Junction and Emporia for same purpose, and work back from Emporia to Portsmouth, stopping at such points as he thinks should be inspected, investigating rumors and reports and keeping Bureau informed daily by telegraph.

August 10: Surgeon White telegraphs as follows:

Conference [authorities of Newport News, Norfolk, Hampton, and Virginia State board] wants assurance that Boston, New York, Philadelphia, and Baltimore will not quarantine Norfolk, Portsmouth, Newport News, and Old Point if quarantine on Hampton is raised. I certify that Hampton is not infected and has been most thoroughly inspected, house to house, with no results. Please ascertain status of New York and other cities and wire results to boards of health interested. It is useless exposure and hardship to quarantine Hampton, and prompt action will be appreciated by all.

Accordingly the health authorities of the cities mentioned were telegraphed:

Conference of local health officers requests me to obtain assurance that Boston, New York, Philadelphia, and Baltimore will not quarantine against Norfolk, Portsmouth, Newport News, and Old Point if the quarantine on Hampton, Va., is raised. Surgeon White, Marine-Hospital Service, who has been at Hampton since outbreak, certifies that Hampton is not infected, and has been most thoroughly inspected with house-to-house inspection, with no suspicious cases found. He states that it is useless exposure and hardship to quarantine against Hampton. This village is from 1 to 2 miles from the National Soldiers' Home, where outbreak occurred. A strong cordon, under Marine-Hospital Service, surrounds the Home and the town of Phoebus, adjoining the Home, on the side farthest from Hampton. Phoebus is also now free from disease, as shown by house-to-house inspection. No new cases or deaths in Home for several days. There is no reason known to me for quarantining against any other places than Phoebus and National Soldiers' Home. I will promptly inform you should any new cases appear. Kindly wire me whether you will give the assurance requested or not.

WYMAN,
Surgeon-General.

Favorable responses were received from New York and Baltimore. No replies have yet been received from Boston and Philadelphia.

August 11: Surgeon Vickery telegraphs that the situation continues favorable, 1 death not from fever, 1 suspicious case isolated. Fourteen hundred and twenty men in tents, disinfection going on well.